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A
S E R M O N,

OCCASIONED BY THE

D E A T H

O F T H E

Rev. RICE HARRIS, D. D.

PREACHED AT HANOVER-STREET,
LONG-ACRE, LONDON,
OCTOBER 25, 1795.

By JAMES MANNING. *K*

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONGREGATION.

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PERMITS

TO ENTER

THE

PORT

OF



BY

THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF

THE

PORT

OF

TO THE
CONGREGATION
OF
PROTESTANT DISSENTERS,
MEETING IN
HANOVER-STREET, LONDON.

GENTLEMEN,

AT your unanimous Request, signified to me in the most obliging manner, I now present you with the Discourse preached on the Death of your late honoured Pastor. The agitation of mind arising from the loss of so endeared a Friend, and the many avocations which the settlement of his affairs occasioned me, prevented my informing myself of some particulars of his Life, which have since come to my knowledge: I have, therefore, made some few additions to the latter part of the Discourse.

I remain,

With great respect and esteem,

Your obliged humble Servant,

JAMES MANNING.



ECCLESIASTES, 12. 7.

*Then shall the Dust return to the Earth
as it was, and the Spirit shall return
unto God who gave it.*

M^Y present appearance in this place, where I have often stood with pleasure, is now attended with very different feelings. Long, long have I lived in uninterrupted harmony with your late Pastor, and many are the instances of his friendship which at this moment rush into my mind, and almost disqualify me for the service in which I am about to engage. Let us try what considerations the text may afford us to lessen our affliction and support our spirits.

The author of the book of Ecclesiastes appears to have taken great delight in studying human nature, and in enquiring into the true
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condition of Mankind, both with respect to this world and another. Indeed our enquiries would be superficial and imperfect, if we confined them to the present world. There is no possibility of thoroughly understanding Man and Human Life, without considering his mortality and the succession of some other state of existence. And astonishingly careless must those persons be, who do not sometimes exercise their thoughts on this subject, and consider it with all the attention of which they are capable.

A change in the whole state of man, so certain, and so great as death introduces; so often forced upon our reflections by the Providence of God in the instances of others; a change naturally so much the object of our fear, and which we are every moment liable to undergo, should, one would expect, be sometimes seriously thought of by the most inattentive creature breathing. Solomon gives us a very
plain,

plain but strong reason why it should be so.

“ It is the end of all men, and therefore the living should lay it to heart.” It commands our attention, because it is our certain and unavoidable doom.

What then is death, this great terror and universal fate of human nature, whose stroke hangs over us, and fills our minds with anxiety. What is this important crisis and change of being that stands before us, and what is the condition to which man is reduced when he dies and ceases to be conversant with this world?

Solomon gives us a very short but very comprehensive and distinct solution of this important question in the words which I have read to you; at least as far as men could modestly go upon sure ground before life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel.

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In the foregoing part of this book we have several very fine and important observations upon the life of man, the dispensations of Providence, and the state of things in this world; and, as an inference from the whole, he concludes with exhortations to take heavenly wisdom or religion as the guide of our lives, and to regulate our whole conduct through life, by the consideration of our being responsible to God. To enforce these exhortations, especially upon those in younger life, he puts them in mind of the approach of old age, with all its long and dreary train of weaknesses and decays, which he describes under the veil of an exquisitely beautiful allegory. "Remember now thy Creator (says he) in
 "the days of thy youth, while the evil days
 "come not, nor the years draw nigh when
 "thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."
 When pains and sorrows shall succeed each other "as the clouds return after the rain."
 In those days, the hands, those once vigorous
 "keepers

“ keepers of the house,” grown paralytic,
 “ shall tremble, and the strong men,” those
 firm and able columns which support it,
 “ shall bow themselves,” and sink under its
 weight, and the external “ grinders” of the
 food, the teeth shall “ cease because they are
 few,” a cloudy dimness shall veil the organs
 of sight, “ they that look out of the windows
 shall be darkened. The doors,” or valves,
 “ shall be shut in the streets,” or alleys of the
 body, when the digestive powers are weaken-
 ed, “ and the sound of the internal grinding
 is low.” Sleep if it light on the eye-lids of
 age will quickly remove again, “ and he shall
 rise up at the voice of the bird.” “ All the
 daughters of music shall be brought low,” and
 he shall no longer be delighted with the voice
 of melody. Timidity and distrust shall pre-
 dominate, and he “ shall be afraid of that
 which is high and fears shall be in the way,”
 and every trifle shall disturb, every difficulty
 discourage him, “ and the almond tree,” or
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the hair whiter than its blossoms, " shall flourish, and the grasshopper" or the slightest inconvenience " shall be a burden," and derange and depress the trembling, aching, exhausted frame. The organs of sense being vitiated and impaired, " desire" and appetite " shall fail, because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets. The silver cord shall be loosed," the spinal marrow will be relaxed and lose its tone, and " the golden bowl," the receptacle of the brain " shall be broken at the fountain" and " the wheel" or instrument of circulation " shall be broken at the cistern;" and when these symptoms appear, and this highly finished piece of mechanism shall be thus dis-jointed and dissolved, " Then shall the Dust " return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit " shall return unto God who gave it."

These words contain a very distinct and comprehensive account of Death, because it makes
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that just difference which ought always to be taken notice of between the body and soul of man.

With such infinite wisdom and art is this union contrived by the author of our frame, that the Materialists, overlooking this distinction, have supposed, that matter itself may be so organized, as to be capable of thinking, and have therefore ventured to assert, that when the structure of the body is destroyed, the whole man ceases to exist, and comes to an utter end. But, according to that more noble and consolatory description, which right reason and scripture give us of human nature, there is a Spirit in man, an intelligent thinking principle, to which the body is only an outward habitation, “ the earthly house of its tabernacle,” as St. Paul elegantly describes it. So that the real existence or life of man, does not depend upon the duration of the bodily frame in which it now acts, but when

that is dissolved and demolished by age or accident, yet still the soul, the invisible, immortal part subsists, though it hath not a body to render its actions visible to the eyes, but seeks some other habitation, and is no more seen.

And as Solomon makes this just distinction between them, and describes each according to its proper nature, so he does not suffer us to forget the original of each, that the one was only dust and earth, before it was assumed into part of the human frame, that the other was more immediately communicated from God, the inspiration of the almighty having given him understanding.

But the principal use of these words, and the chief thought they are intended to convey, is the different effects of Death upon both these parts of our nature. Let us attend to each of these,

I. At that time when man expires, when the decays of nature are finished, whether by slow degrees, or a sudden despatch, whether by the progress of a lingering distemper, or by one violent shock, “ then shall the dust return to the earth as it was.” It does indeed for some time retain the form of a human body, the leading features, but generally with a very sensible difference from the appearance it bore when living. How little beauty and attraction is there in the finest face when death hath spread its cold hand over it, and laid an arrest upon the blood and spirits! The vital principle which used to animate it, withdraws its influence, and returns no more. The countenance which we once beheld with pleasure, and which cheered us with its smiles, now excites neither surprise nor love; but is looked upon with grief if not with horror. The graceful features die away into paleness and distortion. The active limbs become stiff and motionless. Silent is the tongue to whole

whose accents we wished to listen for ever. Sunk is the eye and closed in night, which looked serenity and cheerfulness. The heart which beat with the best affections, is now become as a clod of the valley; and the well-contrived and beautiful fabric wears a deformity which excites abhorrence, where it never failed to inspire delight. We contemplate for a few days the awful ruins, but the decency of mankind, as well as our respect, even to the lifeless remains of what was once our friend, soon oblige us to remove the fairest forms from sight.

Such is the ruinous and offensive state to which death reduces the human frame. When God pronounced the punishment of man's disobedience, it ran in these terms: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 'till thou return to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And this sentence

sentence passeth upon all men, for that all are finners. For though man even in his first state of innocence and perfection was naturally a mortal creature; yet it seems from the account we have of that state in scripture, that if he had preserved his innocence and obedience, the Divine Being would have preserved his life, as the Divine Power can certainly sustain, for ever, a body that is naturally liable to destruction, and preserve it from any internal decays or outward accidents. The immortality that was designed for him if he had persevered in his obedience, was designed as a peculiar favour and reward, and was not a natural consequence of his structure; for the means whereby this immortality was to be obtained was an external thing, the tree of life: and it does not appear that any change was made in the human body when man transgressed. The means whereby the sentence of death was executed, was not by an act of divine omnipotence putting a violent end to his

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his life, or changing his natural composition, but by excluding him from the tree of life, and thus leaving nature, by its own tendency and gradual decay, to wear away and turn to its original principles. It was indeed a long time before death actually came upon him. The nature of man, being then vigorous and healthful, and not impaired by any irregularity, or weakened by inheriting the distempers of former generations, held out a prodigious number of years before the body returned to the dust, in comparison of the hasty progress we make towards the grave. The present generations of men quickly vanish and mingle with the common earth. The body of man is a fine and delicate composition ; it is an instrument of various pleasures ; there is sense and motion in it while the lamp of life continues to burn ; but it is soon blown out by a sudden blast, or burns to the socket. The materials of which it is composed are perishable, and it is the divine wisdom and power alone

alone which hold the various parts so long together. Upheld by the Almighty, they live and breathe for a little while, and then become as senseless as the ground we tread on.

What a lesson of humility does death read to mankind ! The scriptures frequently remind us that our bodies are dust in their original, and shall shortly be reduced to the dust again, to beget in us the virtue of an humble mind ; that we dwell in houses of clay, that our foundation is in the dust, and that we are crushed before the moth. How empty a thing is the pride and pomp of mankind, the majestic and gay appearances of human creatures, when we extend our views a little forward and behold them all buried in silence and oblivion ! How little foundation is there for that state and insolence that men are apt to assume, and that high opinion which they entertain upon any corporeal qualities or ornaments, when we consider that these very

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bodies

bodies are in a little time to be blended with the common dust of the earth. The worm is now the companion of those who formerly boasted of their alliances and the nobility of their descent, and who thought themselves of a different species from the rest of the world. A few feet of earth contain the ashes of him who conquered the world. The shadows of a long night are stretched over all alike. Here end the glories of the world, and the men who had their portion in it; and to an eye of sense, here terminate the history and existence of man. All that remains, to appearance, of the greatest monarch, the wisest politician, the dearest friend after death is a breathless corpse, and that by degrees mingles with and cannot be distinguished from the common dust.

But shall we repose an implicit confidence in our senses? Doth the reasonable, conscious principle within share the same fate with
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with the body? When the earthly tabernacle falls, is the spiritual inhabitant overwhelmed in its ruins? Shall truth and goodness, faith and piety lie buried in the dust? And can we entertain no pleasing hope of meeting the useful member of society, the beloved relative, the faithful teacher, and the affectionate friend any more? Can the natural affections and sentiments of the human mind, admit such a thought; especially after having tasted of the good word of God, and the power of the world to come? Can you bear the thought that your venerable Pastor, whose conversation improved, whose benevolence charmed, and whose preaching edified you, is himself perished in the gulph of annihilation? Can the cordial affection of his numerous friends be satisfied in consigning the object of their esteem to everlasting destruction, after having consoled themselves with the belief and expectation of meeting him again in bliss, in the presence of their common Father and Saviour,

and amidst the assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect? O fatal reverse—severe disappointment—killing stab to all the delights of virtuous and Christian friendship, to the fairest hopes of our rational nature, to the consolations of humanity.

But it cannot be, my brethren—it is not so.* There is a nobler part of man which is otherwise disposed of, when the body sinks into the earth, and this leads us to the II^d. thing to be considered, and the most material consequence of death.

“ The spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

The soul or spirit of man does not return to the earth, nor partake of the same fate with
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* *Haud ita ; tempus erit (noli quo querere modo)
Hoc satis est, hoc constat, erit post funera tempus;
Cum Deus, ut par est, æquos excernet iniquis,
Sontibus insontes, et idonea cuique rependet.*

ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE, ESQ.

the body. Although they were united and subsisted together, and bore each other company in life, yet death makes a separation between them. The rational intelligent principle does not remain in the lifeless body, nor perish with it. Death is the ruin of the body, but it is only the *removal* of the soul. The union is then broken, and the mind departs from this earthly house of its tabernacle. The body is then divested of sense and motion, clearly manifesting the absence of that spiritual principle which thought and acted in it.

Christianity indeed, informs us that this union shall be re-established, and though the soul takes its leave of the body at death, yet the power of God shall raise it out of the dust, re-form its scattered parts, and fit it to be again the instrument of the mind, in its various operations; but, for the present, there is as full and perfect a separation as if they were never to be re-united.

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If the soul, therefore, does not die with the body, whither does it go? As the body returns to its original, so “the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” The soul goes to the great author of its being, the God of the spirits of all flesh. They both flow back again to their own source; the body mingles with its original dust, and the soul enters into the world of spirits. Our present earthly state, and the bodies in which we are now imprisoned, are a veil between us and the intellectual, spiritual world, which deprives us of all direct and visible intercourse with that world, and with that glorious Being who there manifests his presence in the clearest manner. But when that veil is taken away, then those objects, that were before unseen, present themselves to the unembodied mind. The scriptures, I think, clearly teach us that good men, when absent from the body, are present with the Lord, not reduced from a course of usefulness, to the same useless condition

dition with the body in the grave. It was the hope of being with Christ, not sinking into a state of insensibility, which the zealous apostle of the gentiles preferred to a longer continuance in his service upon earth. And what can so effectually reconcile us to the death of our pious friends, as the hope that they are possessed of this felicity? To his faithful care who hath the keys of death and the invisible world, they often committed themselves while living, and into his hands they cheerfully resigned their departing spirits. He has accepted the charge, taken them under his protection, received them into the mansions he went before to provide for them, and he will, as their great Lord and head, in due time, present them before the throne of his Father with unspeakable joy. The spirits of just men return to God to live eternally in his presence, where there is fulness of joy. But the impure and vicious spirit shall make its appearance before the
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bar of God, and thence be banished into outer darkness to be the companion of wicked spirits for ever.

I will now beg your attention to two inferences, from what has been said.

I. That it is a great consolation under the prospect of being reduced to dust, that our bodies shall rise again at the last day. If indeed it be made sufficiently known to us that we shall live after death, “ whether in the body or out of the body,” is not a ground for anxiety. However it hath pleased God to reveal to us in some degree this point also. Not only our natural hopes of a future state are confirmed, we are also taught that we shall be again cloathed with bodies suitable to that heavenly state. These bodies in their present state are not fit for the regions of purity and joy. They want great refinements to accommodate them to the heavenly climate.

mate. This flesh and blood 'till it is purified, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. That which was sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption ; that which was sown in dishonour, shall be raised in glory ; that which was sown a natural body, shall be raised a spiritual body. Let us not then tremble to convey the bodies of our friends to the tomb. Does the Husbandman fear to commit the good seed to the ground, because for a while it appears to rot into common earth, when he believes it shall spring up and bring forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty? No—That is revived by *dying* and grows by putrefaction. It is sown bare grain ; it rises up invested and adorned with a beautiful cloathing. And if God so clothe the grafs of the field, which to-day *is*, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Let us only sincerely endeavour to purify ourselves from all filthiness of flesh as well

as spirit, and “glorify God in our bodies,” and the time will come when God “shall change these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body, according to that mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.”

II. Since from what has been said we see what are the nature and effects of death, let us be hence led to prepare for it.

Let us not murmur that this infirm, sickly, and imperfect body is under a sentence of mortality, but labour that “when our earthly house of this Tabernacle is dissolved, we may have a building with God; an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens”.

And since the Soul returns to God who gave it, which is the point of greatest consequence, what a concern should this excite in us, to
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make a proper appearance before the God of the Spirits of all flesh !

There is something great and awful in the thought of a human Soul, appearing before its Maker to take its trial and hear its doom for eternity ; to undergo that enquiry, and hear that sentence, which shall fix its state for ever. Let us endeavour to be in that disposition of mind we shall wish to be when we make this awful appearance. And since we know not how soon our souls may be required of us, and called back to God who gave them, let us, according to our Saviour's advice, " be always ready."

How many of the souls of our friends, with whom we lately conversed, are already returned to God ? The only way in which they can now be serviceable to us, the best honour we can pay to their memories, and the most useful improvement we can make of

these events, is to learn from them the necessity of being prepared for a future and eternal state. Our bodies will soon be mingled in the same dust with theirs, and our spirits follow theirs to the God who gave them ; and if we would meet with a kind reception, and find pleasure in our return to the author of our being, we must endeavour to purify ourselves as he is pure.

When we seriously consider this subject, what light does it throw on the dark valley of the shadow of Death ! What delightful prospects does it open to the eye of Faith ! Who can describe or conceive the joy of a glorified spirit in the moment that the body returns to the earth, and the spirit unto God ! When the soul is set at liberty from the incumbrances of flesh and blood, with what transport does it fly to kindred spirits ! These things surpass the language and imagination
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of mortals, and will continue to do so, till this mortal shall have put on immortality.

How consolatory are these reflections at all times, but more especially when it pleases God to remove from us, those who have been long endeared to us.---My brethren, the breathless corpse of your Pastor, which we lately committed to the silent tomb, is but the ruin of the earthly tabernacle, the worn out garment with which for a while he was clothed. This only is returned to the Earth as it was. The immortal, unembodied spirit is returned to God who gave it, to report the manner in which his message was delivered and received.

But though we must not murmur that our friend is removed from us, we cannot but lament our own and the public loss; a loss more severely felt, because it has so soon followed the removal of two other ministers of
great

great eminence and worth, any one of whom would be a general loss at any time. This society has lost a faithful Pastor, who was ever ready to advise, comfort, console, and edify his flock. His Brethren in the Ministry have lost a prudent adviser and a generous friend. He was a zealous and successful solicitor for their relief; and his application for support, both in public and private charities, had this recommendation, that however any man's opinion differed from his own, he never intentionally overlooked an indigent person, in the distribution of the numerous charities with which he was entrusted. To be poor, and to be honest, were sufficient inducements with him to be their advocate and patron. Tho' born and educated in the principles of the established religion, he no sooner became capable of thinking for himself, than he impartially considered the arguments by which Churchmen and Dissenters severally defended their conduct,

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and the arguments of the latter made so deep an impression on his mind, that he became a Protestant Dissenter from enquiry and conviction. He frequently mentioned the perusal of Mr. Towgood's Letters to Mr. White, as having had great weight in forming his opinion, and settling his judgment. In adopting these principles he made no small sacrifice of worldly emolument. His uncle, who was one of his Majesty's Chaplains, offered, at his own expence, to send him to the University, and gave him every reason to expect considerable preferment from his patronage, and the exertion of his own abilities. But it was a principle with him, to which he adhered through life, never to sacrifice the liberty of thinking for himself at the shrine of worldly emolument. But though he embraced the principles of the Dissenters, he wished not to be understood as censuring those, who, upon any principles, satisfactory to their own minds, professed the public system of Faith.

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He only claimed, that which he esteemed equally the right of others, the liberty of thinking for himself.

Besides these general principles, which are embraced by all consistent Protestants, those who were in habits of intimacy with him, must have observed, that strong masculine understanding and knowledge of the world, which peculiarly qualified him for advising his friends in the critical emergencies and trials of life. His warm, social affections led him to take a lively interest in the temporal success and moral conduct of those for whom he professed a regard.

Independent and disinterested, he feared speaking necessary truths to no one, and abhorred to the utmost, all approaches to mean and servile compliances, in any thing contrary to his honor and his principles. No one could be more a stranger to disguise and insincerity,

sincerity, artifice and cunning, or a greater lover of honesty and integrity. His feelings were naturally strong, and his language full of energy, which rendered his conversation highly animated and interesting; and his sense of religion and benevolent affections, prevented his feelings from betraying him into the bitterness of party and personal invective. If ever he expressed himself with unusual warmth, it was not against men but against principles, against principles which he considered as having a direct tendency to infidelity, by materializing the soul and giving up the inspiration of the scriptures. Unhappily he was not mistaken as to the tendency of these opinions, but lived to see many who had embraced them avowing themselves unbelievers.

Of his manner of conducting the solemn duties of the sabbath, you who were his constant hearers are more competent judges than myself. From the advice he has given to

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others,

others, I am convinced he would not bewilder his hearers in the labyrinths of controversy, or the nice distinctions of the schoolmen, he would not lead his flock for nourishment, to the dry and barren hills of cold and unedifying speculation, but into good pastures and to feed by the still waters of life. His discourses would be rational and practical, scriptural and evangelical. It could have been such a course of preaching alone which has so greatly endeared him to this society; and which, united with that candid and peaceable temper he cherished in himself and inculcated on others, excite at this moment a train of painful recollections. Yes, and I will bear my testimony with you to the friendly dispositions of his heart. During an intercourse of five-and-twenty years, I never experienced from him any thing but affection and kindness, and I shall ever cherish the remembrance of his friendship as one of the chief felicities of my life.

Having

Having taken this view of the character of Dr. Harris, curiosity and attachment concur in prompting us to extend the retrospect, and we become solicitous to know something of his connexions, and the leading events of a life in which we have been deeply interested.

He was born in the Principality of Wales, in the year 1731. Soon after his birth, his parents removed with their family to Exeter, in which city he received his grammar education, and acquired a taste for literature which nothing could extinguish. It was the original intention of his parents to bring him up to business, but his friends perceiving the strong bent of his mind to literary pursuits, advised them to consent to his going to some academy. Accordingly, about the year 1754, we find him settled in an Academy kept at that time at Mile-End. Having received all the advantages this institution could afford him, he finished his education at another

Academy, in Well-Close-Square, under the tuition of Dr. Jennings, and two other very able Tutors.

In Jan. 1762, he entered on the Ministerial Office, having attained the age, as he himself observed, at which his Divine Master began his public Ministry. He did not chuse to enter on his Pastoral Office immediately on leaving the Academy, but spent the three first years of his Ministry, in assisting his friend Dr. Furneaux at Clapham. Much of this time was devoted to a thorough examination of the most remarkable controverted doctrines. He did not suffer himself to be imposed on by the confidence with which the violent of all parties delivered their sentiments, and not having embraced the novel opinion, that the writers of the New Testament had actually been guilty of mistakes and false reasoning, he brought the different doctrines to the standard of truth, to the law, and to the testimony,

mony, and by these means happily steered between the opposite extremes.

In 1766, he was unanimously invited by this Society to assist your venerable Pastor Dr. Earle. This truly respectable Minister lived till 1768, when Dr. Harris succeeded him in the Pastoral Office, in which he has continued without any interruption for 27 years. But his public services were not confined to the duties of this place.

His penetrating judgment well fitted him for public business, and his known honor and integrity early recommended him as a proper person to be entrusted with the public funds belonging to the Dissenters; and his colleagues will bear testimony to his activity and fidelity in the discharge of his trust, till bodily disorders interrupted his usefulness, and put a final period to a life, the greater part of which had been spent in relieving the present wants,
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and making provision for the future happiness of his fellow creatures.

And now, my Brethren, a new scene opens upon you, who are the Members of this Congregation, in the election of a successor. Permit me to observe to you, that you stand accountable for the sacred inheritance of freedom in choosing your own Ministers, delivered to you from your fathers, and that what you now do, may affect you, your children, and the dissenting cause for generations to come. Your society, for more than a century, has been distinguished by a succession of respectable Ministers, and to you the dissenting congregations in the country have been indebted for very liberal contributions for their support. As you stand in a conspicuous point of view, your example will have influence in other societies, whose zeal in their profession will be animated by your consistency and steadiness, or damped by your lukewarmness

ness and instability. Suffer me therefore with the sincerest affection to this society, from which I have experienced many marks of attention and friendship, and from a concern for the credit of religion in general to exhort you not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together, but let the regularity of your attendance in this place during the vacancy, be such as to preserve to your society that respectability in this city to which it has been hitherto so justly entitled. Proceed my Brethren, with caution, union and peace among yourselves, and with an humble dependance on divine direction on this interesting occasion. Let every one follow the things which make for peace, and consult the good of the whole without any undue concern for the gratification of his own inclination and taste. Check every beginning and tendency in yourselves or others to inflame and disunite you. Manifest to the world the reasonableness of your chusing your own Ministers, by the fit
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and laudable manner in which you make use of it. Shew that you have profited by the example which your late Pastor has set you of moderation, prudence and candour. Nothing would have grieved him more than the apprehension of discord in the choice of a successor, and if the spirits of the departed have yet any converse with this world, if your deceased Pastor retain any remembrance of the past, and any sense of your present situation, it will be some addition to his felicity, to think that those lessons of faith and piety, benevolence and candour he delivered, are not forgotten or disregarded.



May the great Head of the Church give you a Pastor after his own heart, who shall assist you in your passage through this life and your preparation for that world where we shall again meet all that have been truly valuable to us, never to separate or die any more.

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